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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT - Iraq - Saddam Hussein's Trial
Transatlantic Relations Middle East U.S. Immigration Policy
PARIS - Thursday, April 06, 2006

(A) SUBJECTS COVERED IN TODAY'S REPORT:

Iraq - Saddam Hussein's Trial
Transatlantic Relations
Middle East
U.S. Immigration Policy

B) SUMMARY OF COVERAGE:

Right-of-center weekly L'Express interviews Assistant
Secretary Dan Fried on the Transatlantic Alliance. The title

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reads: "I Would Like More France in NATO." AS Fried explains
NATO's role "which remains faithful to what it has always
been." but he also points to article 5 which was invoked on
September 12, 2001: "It is clear that the fight against
terrorism is part of NATO's mission. France voted in favor of
article 5." AS Fried also insists on the fact that "more NATO
does not mean less Europe." and recalls that "President Bush
has reiterated his wish for a powerful Europe." AS Fried also
comments on "the EU's successful expansion" adding that
"Turkey's membership concerns the Europeans." AS Fried
concludes on the successful elections in Ukraine and states:
"We want to have good relations with Moscow. but we have
certain reservations about democracy in Russia."

Left-of-center Le Monde carries an analysis announced on the
front page: "How Paris and Washington Have Renewed Their Ties"
while the inside two-page report is entitled: "France-U.S.:
The Story of an About-Face." Ambassador Stapleton is
mentioned. (See Part C) A separate piece in Le Monde notes
that the Iranian nuclear issue is one of the "privileged areas
of Franco-American cooperation" adding that while France's
efforts within the EU3 to negotiate with Teheran have failed,
the "transatlantic relationship has not been affected." Le
Monde says that during the negotiation period with Iran "The
French played the good cop and the Americans played the bad
cop. Because there are no diplomatic relations between
Washington and Teheran, Europe played the middleman." One
unnamed source in Paris says, "Teheran sees the Americans
through Europe." On the subject of the new cooperation between
the U.S. and India on a civilian nuclear program Le Monde
quotes a French official who says, "France paved the way for
the U.S. In Washington, however, French diplomatic
contributions in this area are kept under wraps. because the
Bush team has yet to sway Congress to make the legislative
modifications necessary to facilitate Indo-U.S. nuclear
cooperation and to publicly boast of the active support of
France would be damaging."

The Le Monde editorial is devoted to "Saddam Hussein's
Crimes." (See Part C) Le Figaro reports that "protest against
Ibrahim Jaafari" is rising. The Iraqi vice president has asked
PM Jaafari to resign in order to avoid a political crisis.
"Jaafari's remaining in his position is the principal obstacle
to the formation of the government. George Bush suspects that
Jaafari is allowing Iran to have a dangerous influence on the
Iraqi political and military scene."

The "supposed" recognition of Israel by Hamas, elicits a
report in Liberation clarifying the confusion: "It was a
linguistic quid-pro-quo," says Liberation, which is turning
into "a diplomatic quid-pro-quo." According to Liberation,
"Zahar signed a text in English a bit quickly, missing the
real meaning of what he was signing because of poor English."
Le Figaro carries instead a report on "the Hamas proposal for
two states."

Columnist Alexandre Adler titles his analysis in Le Figaro
"Middle East: Major Policy or Impasse" (See Part C)

La Croix devotes its lead story and editorial to immigration
issues in the U.S. which are "dividing America." (See Part C)

Once again front pages and editorials are devoted to the
continuing social and political crisis surrounding the CPE

legislation. Left-of-center Liberation headlines "A State of Unreason" alongside a picture of Chirac standing between Villepin and Sarkozy and adds: "With an impotent Chirac, the rivalry between Sarkozy and Villepin is paralyzing the executive branch, while the unions are demanding a withdrawal of the legislation." The analysis inside is ruthless, calling Sarkozy: "the gravedigger, Villepin "a swank" and saying that "for Chirac, the end (of his presidency) will also be failed" in reference to his failed election. Le Figaro's editorial reiterates the need for "a change in mentalities" in France emphasizing that "despite the students' `real concern for their missed classes and imminent exam period, they continue to block universities and to demonstrate: this is proof of how deep is their concern, while it shows that the crisis goes far beyond the CPE." Le Parisien, which headlines: "Flexibility, Should We Fear It?" carries the results of a poll indicating that 61% of the youth polled is ready to accept takings risks in their careers. But says Michel Onfray, a philosopher: "The French are viscerally opposed to liberalism." The political crisis elicits reports about Villepin's statement yesterday at the National Assembly when he said "he would draw the necessary lesson from this crisis." While some in the opposition read a sign that he could step down into his words, his supporters deny this categorically. France Soir headlines: "Can He Stay?" while La Tribune headlines: "Villepin Ties His Fate to the CPE."

The electronic media, Le Figaro and Le Parisien report on research efforts between France and the U.S. for a vaccine against Chikungunya.

(C) SUPPORTING TEXT/BLOCK QUOTES:

Iraq - Saddam Hussein's Trial

"Saddam's Crimes"

Left-of-center Le Monde in its editorial (04/06): "The `Anfal' operation was one of the worst crimes of the Saddam era. The indictment for genocide marks a turning point in the legal proceedings against the former Iraqi dictator, even if a number of uncertainties persist as to the fate of the accused. Since the beginning of the trial, `only' the massacre in Doujail had been invoked. The others were considered to be too sensitive politically as they involved foreign powers (who supported Saddam? Who provided him with the weapons and gas?) For the Doujail massacre, Saddam Hussein could be executed. The general prosecutor would like to see Saddam Hussein hanged if he is found guilty, without waiting for the verdicts in the other cases. The Iraqi president. would like to see Saddam Hussein tried for `all of his crimes.' The partisans of a swift execution are taking into account the current situation in Iraq, namely the guerilla insurgency and would like to put a stop to the atmosphere of impunity that reigns. They want to turn the page. The others are thinking first and foremost about justice. The latter is the more preferable of the two."

Transatlantic Relations

"France-U.S.: The Story of an About-Face"

Nathalie Nougayrede and Sylvie Kauffmann in left-of-center Le Monde (04/06): "Iraq separated them. The Syrian-Lebanese question, and now Iran, has brought them together. But without the old enthusiasm. At Evian in June 2003. the handshake between Chirac and Bush, under the concerned looks of their advisers, was forceful. Three years after the beginning of the Iraq war, the U.S. Ambassador to France, Craig Stapleton says the relationship between the two men is `normal.' Philip Gordon of the Brookings Institute qualifies the situation as an `about-face.' How did it come about? Each side tends to claim responsibility for the successful turnaround. But the story of the Franco-American rapprochement is a story guided by reason and necessity. and by shared interests. After President Bush's second election, and because of the difficulties in Iraq, diplomacy takes over. Soon after Secretary Rice took office, she came to Paris and gave a

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speech, which was a resounding success. These days, the Elysee feels `it is in' and considers that it can play the intermediary between the U.S. and the Arab countries. Can one talk of the great `reconciliation?' The French side does not clamor this on every rooftop. Public opinion is clearly anti-Bush. And if the U.S. considers France its best ally in the fight against terrorism, it is because this is an issue where they share the same interests. On the U.S. side, there are few illusions about how deep French anti-Americanism goes. One of the areas of `non-convergence' mentioned by the Americans is the role of NATO. But Washington appreciates France's support in the formation of a new Iraqi government, while it hopes for more. The tone is one of expectation: while `Condi' Rice visited Paris on March 30th, it was only for a couple of hours. But she went to Baghdad with Jack Straw: Iraq does indeed create close ties."

U.S. Immigration Policy "Open or Close"

Dominique Quinio in Catholic La Croix (04/06): "The scope of the debates and demonstrations on immigration in the U.S. is unprecedented since the Vietnam war. The American government is seeking to control immigration even if it means damaging the U.S.'s image, which is also the hallmark of its national identity, as a land that is open and ethnically diverse. This issue may be American, but a great many countries, including France, are faced with the same problem: an ageing population, unskilled job opportunities that remain vacant even if there is high unemployment and a growing anxiety with regard to the integration of immigrant populations. Governments are torn between the need to find laborers abroad and the fear of not being able to control their flow. This is the reason for 'selective immigration.' Which serves only the interests of the northern countries disregarding the needs of the south."

Middle East

"The Middle East: Major Policy or Impasse"
Alexandre Adler in right-of-center Le Figaro (01/06): "The new idea in the Orient is no longer the search for peace or the acceptance of limited conflicts, but rather the bitter rediscovery of closed off identities as evidenced by an Arab Middle East . where the triumph of Hamas, in Palestine, has already produced an irreparable shock. Israeli abstentions (in the recent vote) and the dispersed voices of the 'folksy' or tribal parties is the counterpart to the upsurge of integrism in the opposing camp. As the first exalt an interminable jihad . the (Israeli) rejection of a 'major policy' means that they accept the logic of the endless temporary, based on the eternity of the balance of power and pragmatic individualism. Is it forbidden to hope that the example of Boutros-Ghali . could lead to the sowing in Israel of a quickening urge to find original solutions which would bring together Israelis and their Arab neighbors, but by the worst method: fatwa and political suicide?" STALPETON